

27 NOV 1939

GOVERNMENT STATISTICIAN, BRISBANE.

BULLETIN NO. 32 OF 1939.

Confidential until released for publication as under :-

Evening Papers .. 24th November, 1939.
Morning Papers .. 25th November, 1939.

RETAIL PRICES - SEPTEMBER QUARTER, 1939.FOOD AND RENT (4 AND 5 ROOMED HOUSES) "B" SERIES.

Index numbers for September quarter 1939 (with base 1000 in 1923-27 for the six State Capitals) were Brisbane 853, Toowoomba 825, Rockhampton 836, Townsville 913, Bundaberg 800, Charters Towers 824, and Warwick 784.

From June quarter 1939 to September quarter 1939 this index did not alter in Brisbane. There were decreases in Toowoomba (0.12 per cent.), Rockhampton (0.59 per cent.), Townsville (0.65 per cent.), and Bundaberg (0.25 per cent.), but Charters Towers and Warwick showed increases of 3.13 and 0.77 per cent. respectively. Food and grocery costs declined in all cities. There were rises in the rent indexes in Brisbane, Toowoomba, Bundaberg, Charters Towers and Warwick, particularly in the two latter. In Rockhampton and Townsville there was no alteration. In Brisbane the chief increases in price were for potatoes (about 1d. a lb. dearer), bread ($\frac{1}{4}$ d. a loaf dearer), and beef. Eggs declined 8d. a dozen. The weighted average rent of four and five roomed houses rose from 230.06d. in May to 230.58d. in August.

Compared with September quarter 1938 the percentage increases in the food and rent indexes were Brisbane 0.95, Toowoomba 1.35, Rockhampton 0.84, Townsville 0.88, Bundaberg 1.14, Charters Towers 8.99, and Warwick 3.98. Food and grocery indexes were higher in all cities than a year earlier and rents also increased. In Brisbane the food index was 0.83 per cent. up and the rent index 1.30 per cent.. The chief items to show rises were bread ($\frac{3}{4}$ d. a loaf), flour ($\frac{1}{2}$ d. a lb.), onions ($1\frac{3}{4}$ d. a lb.), and potatoes ($\frac{1}{2}$ d. per 7 lb.). The chief decreases were mutton ($\frac{1}{2}$ d. a lb.), beef (almost $\frac{1}{4}$ d. a lb.), bacon ($\frac{1}{2}$ d. a lb.) and eggs (1d. a doz.). The average rent of 4 and 5 roomed houses rose from 227.43d. to 230.58d. between August 1938 and August 1939, an increase of 3.15d. a week.

ALL ITEMS - "C" SERIES.

Index numbers for September quarter 1939 (with base 1000 in 1923-27 for the six State Capitals) were Brisbane 866, Toowoomba 853, Rockhampton 861, Townsville 912, Bundaberg 843, Charters Towers 886 and Warwick 834.

From June quarter 1939 to September quarter 1939 there was no alteration in the "All Items" index for Brisbane. There were small decreases in Toowoomba, Rockhampton, Townsville and Bundaberg and increases in Charters Towers and Warwick. As stated above, food and grocery costs declined in all cities, and rents were higher in five cities and unchanged in two. Clothing and footwear costs were very slightly higher in Brisbane but the indexes for the other cities were the same as in June quarter. In the miscellaneous group there was no alteration in the indexes for Brisbane, Townsville and Warwick. Rockhampton registered a very small increase. There were decreases in Toowoomba, Bundaberg and Charters Towers, the largest being in Toowoomba where there was a decrease in electricity charges. In Brisbane percentage variations in the indexes were food and groceries - 0.23, rent + 0.23, clothing and footwear + 0.12.

Compared with September quarter 1938 the "C" index was higher in all cities. The percentage increases were Brisbane 0.93, Toowoomba 0.83, Rockhampton 0.47, Townsville 0.77, Bundaberg 0.96, Charters Towers 5.10 and Warwick 2.58. Increases were registered in all cities for food and groceries, rent and clothing. The miscellaneous group showed rises in Brisbane, Bundaberg, Charters Towers and Warwick, and decreases in Toowoomba, Rockhampton, and Townsville, the decreases being largely due to reductions in electricity tariffs in those cities. In Brisbane food and grocery costs increased 0.83 per cent., rent 1.30 per cent., clothing and footwear 1.09 per cent., and miscellaneous 0.63 per cent..

Compared with March quarter 1933, when the Brisbane index reached the lowest point recorded in the depression years (747), the index was higher by 15.93 per cent..

COMPARISON OF COSTS IN THE QUEENSLAND CITIES.

The following table shows the amounts necessary in September quarter 1939 to purchase what would have cost £1 in Brisbane.

City	All Items	Food and Groceries	Rent (4 and 5 Rooms)	Clothing and Footwear
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Brisbane ..	1. 0. 0	1. 0. 0	1. 0. 0	1. 0. 0
Toowoomba ..	19. 8	19. 0	19.11	19.11
Rockhampton ..	19.11	1. 0.10	17. 7	1. 0. 4
Townsville ..	1. 1. 1	1. 2. 3	1. 0. 2	1. 0. 3
Bundaberg ..	19. 6	1. 1. 2	15. 0	1. 0. 3
Charters Towers ..	1. 0. 6	1. 2. 6	14. 5	1. 0. 5
Warwick ..	19. 3	19.11	16. 0	19.10

COMPARISON OF COMMONWEALTH AND STATES BASIC WAGES.

In the following statement comparisons are made between Commonwealth and State Court basic wages in the various Capital Cities and States. The figures in the columns headed "Adjusted State Basic Wage" show the amounts a worker would require in Brisbane (or Queensland) to purchase the goods that he could buy with the State Basic Wages of other States. The margins between the Brisbane (or Queensland) figure and the other figures in these columns show the advantage to the Queensland State Basic Wage earner.

STATE	METROPOLITAN				WHOLE STATE a.		
	Price Index Nos. "C" Series	Commonwealth Basic Wage b.	State Basic Wage c.	Adjusted State Basic Wage d.	Price Index Nos. "C" Series	State Basic Wage c.	Adjusted State Basic Wage d.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Queensland ..	866	3.16. 0	4. 4. 0	4. 4. 0	867	4. 4. 8	4. 4. 8
New South Wales	933	4. 2. 0	4. 2. 0	3.16. 1	930	4. 2. 0	3.16. 5
Victoria ..	918	4. 0. 0	4. 0. 0	3.15. 6	915	3.19.10	3.15. 8
S. Australia ..	903	3.17. 0	3.18. 0	3.14.10	899	3.18. 0	3.15. 3
W. Australia ..	904	3.17. 0	4. 2. 2	3.18. 9	918	4. 3. 3	3.18. 7
Tasmania ..	905	3.17. 0	3.17. 0	3.13. 8	896	3.17. 0	3.14. 6

- Average for "5 towns" in each State, weighted by population.
- Corresponding to the September Quarter "Court" Index numbers with the addition of the special loadings. To be operative from beginning of first pay period in December.
- In New South Wales the Basic Wage of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration is adopted in State Awards. Victoria and Tasmania have no declared State Basic Wage, but awards follow Commonwealth rates to a large extent; and Commonwealth rates have been shown for these States. For Queensland, South Australia, and Western Australian current State Basic Wages are shown.
- This represents the Basic Wage of each State with adjustments for differences in the cost of living (C Series).

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23rd November, 1939.

RETAIL PRICES INDEXES.Table No. 1. FOOD, GROCERIES AND RENT (4 AND 5 ROOMED HOUSES) - "B" SERIES.

(Base = 1000 in 1923-27 in Six State Capitals).

CITY	Year Ending Decr. 1928	Year Ending Decr. 1938	Year Ending Sept. 1939	QUARTERS ENDING				
				Sept. 1938	Decr. 1938	March 1939	June 1939	Sept. 1939
Brisbane ..	901	838	854	845	839	870	853	853
Toowoomba ..	833	806	824	814	802	842	826	825
Rockhampton ..	858	825	839	829	823	854	841	836
Townsville ..	1047	900	918	905	906	934	919	913
Bundaberg ..	(b)	781	801	791	788	813	802	800
Weighted Average - Five Towns (a)	892	837	853	844	838	869	853	853
Charters Towers	942	751	800	756	763	814	799	824
Warwick ..	841	732	775	754	758	781	778	784

Table No. 2. THE "ALL ITEMS" INDEX - "C" SERIES.

(Base = 1000 in 1923-27 in Six State Capitals).

CITY	Year Ending Decr. 1928	Year Ending Decr. 1938	Year Ending Sept. 1939	QUARTERS ENDING				
				Sept. 1938	Decr. 1938	March 1939	June 1939	Sept. 1939
Brisbane ..	917	852	865	858	855	874	866	866
Toowoomba ..	906	843	853	846	839	863	855	853
Rockhampton ..	903	853	862	857	852	871	864	861
Townsville ..	1023	902	914	905	906	923	915	912
Bundaberg ..	(b)	831	843	835	834	849	845	843
Weighted Average - Five Towns (a)	915	854	866	859	856	875	867	867
Charters Towers	925	839	871	843	848	878	871	886
Warwick ..	914	800	828	813	816	830	830	834

(a) Prior to 1937 the five towns in the weighted averages included Charters Towers and Warwick which have now been replaced by Townsville and Bundaberg.

(b) Prices for Bundaberg were not collected prior to September quarter 1936.

Table No. 3. AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES - FOOD AND GROCERIES.Brisbane.

Commodity and Unit of Quantity			MONTH OF			Commodity and Unit of Quantity			MONTH OF		
			Sept. 1938	June 1939	Sept. 1939				Sept. 1938	June 1939	Sept. 1939
			d.	d.	d.				d.	d.	d.
Bread ..	2 lb.	5.00	5.50	5.75	Milk ..	1 qt.	6.00	6.00	6.00		
Flour ..	2 lb.	3.23	4.05	4.05	Bacon (Rashers)	1 lb.	15.36	14.50	14.73		
Tea ..	1 lb.	27.05	26.95	26.95	Beef - Sirloin						
Sugar ..	1 lb.	3.98	3.98	3.98	Roast ..	1 lb.	8.85	8.40	8.70		
Jam (Plum)	1½ lb.	7.95	8.15	8.25	Beef - Steak						
Raisins ..	1 lb.	10.50	10.55	10.64	Rump ..	1 lb.	11.30	11.25	11.40		
Potatoes ..	7 lb.	14.73	8.18	15.32	Beef - Rolled						
Onions ..	1 lb.	2.04	3.93	3.86	Brisket	1 lb.	5.50	5.40	5.40		
Soap ..	1 lb.	6.24	6.15	6.18	Mutton - Leg	1 lb.	8.00	7.40	7.45		
Butter ..	1 lb.	19.00	19.00	19.00	Mutton - Chops						
Cheese ..	1 lb.	13.32	13.27	13.27	Loin ..	1 lb.	8.10	7.40	7.50		
Eggs ..	1 doz.	15.55	22.64	14.55	Pork - Leg	1 lb.	11.45	11.05	11.30		